



# BRANCHING OUT

NOVA SCOTIA  
Department of Education, Public Schools Branch

The month of February is African Heritage month—a time to focus our thoughts on the rich cultural heritage and contributions of African Nova Scotians to our province and our country. It is also a time to remember the struggles to achieve equality and the individuals who led those struggles. Those struggles continue in our own time. I commend all in public education who continue “to fight the good fight” against racism and intolerance and who seek to educate and bring about equality and justice. I especially commend those who have worked on the activities and events to make African Heritage Month 2009 a celebratory success.

*Dr. Alan Lowe, Senior Executive Director, Public Schools Branch*

## Celebrate African Heritage Month

There are several ways you can access African Heritage Month event information this year. Visit the African Nova Scotian Affairs (ANSA) website

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/ansa/>

There you will find a page dedicated to African Heritage Month with links to other sites featuring African Heritage Month information, events, or activities.

The AHMI Network calendar of events can be accessed from the home page of the ANSA website and will be updated as new and/or revised information is received.

## Literacy/Mathematics Mentor Workshop

On April 2–3, 2009 a workshop for Literacy and Mathematics mentors from across the province will be held for approximately 185 participants.

Literacy Mentors will benefit from a two-day presentation by Damian Cooper, a well known theorist and practitioner in the field of assessment. He will work with mentors around the strategies and tools to assist and improve student learning and the role mentors can play in helping teachers in this regard.

Dr. Marian Small will work with Mathematics mentors around the use and applications of the *Prime: Patterns and Algebra* resource.

## EBSCOhost changes and refinements

EBSCO has added several enhancements to the recently redesigned EBSCOhost interface. Check out the summary of the new features given below:

- A new **Image Quick View** limiter includes multiple sort options by image type. Can I limit my EBSCOhost search results to articles that have Image Quick View available? ([http://support.epnet.com/knowledge\\_base/detail.php?id=4207](http://support.epnet.com/knowledge_base/detail.php?id=4207))
- A **Date Slider Bar** may be offered to the right of the results list, with a choice of search date ranges How do I use the Date Slider feature in EBSCOhost? ([http://support.epnet.com/knowledge\\_base/detail.php?id=3873](http://support.epnet.com/knowledge_base/detail.php?id=3873))
- **SmartText Searching** provides a search on large amounts of text What is SmartText searching? ([http://support.ebsco.com/knowledge\\_base/detail.php?topic=&id=3736&page=1](http://support.ebsco.com/knowledge_base/detail.php?topic=&id=3736&page=1))
- **Page Composer** allows you to create customized web pages for searches and articles. How do I use Page Composer? ([http://support.ebsco.com/knowledge\\_base/detail.php?topic=&id=1276&page=2](http://support.ebsco.com/knowledge_base/detail.php?topic=&id=1276&page=2))

EBSCO is accessible in Nova Scotia public schools without a password at <http://search.ebscohost.com>

Teachers and students may also access this service at home, using their school user ID and password. See your school administrator for this information.

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Back issues are available at <http://lrl.ednet.ns.ca/branching.shtml>

If you wish to receive the newsletter, please send an email to [lrl@ednet.ns.ca](mailto:lrl@ednet.ns.ca).

## Who's New in Public Schools Branch?

### Director of Diversity, Equity, & Special Projects, Public Schools Branch

Lorraine Smith-Collins is the Director of Diversity, Equity, & Special Projects for the Public Schools Branch of the Department of Education.

One of the seven goals of the Department of Education, as stated in the 2008-09 Business Plan, is to foster access, equity, and diversity through and within education and training. Lorraine advises and makes recommendations in areas that fall under the umbrella of diversity, equity, and anti-bias principles for work done within the Public Schools Branch. This includes working in collaboration with staff of the Department, Boards, schools and other educational partners in order to integrate equity and diversity for all aspects of education.

We all need to be explicit about valuing diversity and equity. All educators should be asking themselves these questions: "Where does equity and diversity fit into what I am doing? What could it look like? How can I integrate diversity and equity into the work that I do?"

Need advice or help in answering these questions for your school or classroom? Contact Lorraine!

#### Wela'liq

(Thank you in Mi'kmaw, from one person to a group).

Lorraine Smith-Collins

Director, Diversity, Equity, & Special Projects

902-722-1405

[smithcla@gov.ns.ca](mailto:smithcla@gov.ns.ca)

### Correspondence Studies

Various correspondence courses from grades 7 to 12 are available for students.

For more information, visit our website at <http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca> > Correspondence Studies or call (902)424-4054

### Coordinator, Correspondence Studies

Due to the well-deserved retirement of David Smith, Sarah Hainsworth is now the new Coordinator, Distributed Learning, in the Learning Resources and Technology Services Division of the Public Schools Branch, Nova Scotia Department of Education.

She is responsible for the Correspondence Study Program, including its transition to online delivery. This program provides a means of obtaining public school credits for more than 1800 students in 2200 course registrations. Half of these students are currently enrolled in public schools in Nova Scotia.

Sarah can be contacted at [hainswsl@gov.ns.ca](mailto:hainswsl@gov.ns.ca), by phone at (902)424-2452, or through the website at <http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca>

### Social Studies Consultant

The Department of Education's new Social Studies Consultant is Jennifer Burke. Building on a strong background as a classroom teacher, department head, program consultant, and curriculum writer, Jennifer will work with a range of education partners to design, develop, implement, and evaluate social studies programs and courses and related resources.

Current priorities include the piloting of new Atlantic Canada social studies curricula for grades 3 and 5 and the development of student and teacher resources for grades 3, 4, and 5. Jennifer will also support the implementation of Atlantic Canada Social Studies 6. Other projects include the redevelopment of grade 9 social studies.

At the senior high level, further to the finalization of Advanced Global Geography 12 and Advanced Global History 12 curricula, Jennifer will work over the next three years on the development of curriculum guides for law, sociology, economics, and political science.

Jennifer may be reached by telephone at (902) 424-8276 or email [burkejel@gov.ns.ca](mailto:burkejel@gov.ns.ca).

February is African

Month

### Find New Titles in the Education Media Library Online Catalogue

You can see new loan and dubbing materials available from the Media Library by visiting our online catalogue at <http://lrl.ednet.ns.ca> > Search online catalogue. Click on the New Materials link. For more information, or to order materials, please call (902) 424-2440

Borrow one of our new loan titles:

**Addiction: Disease or Behaviour** This video features Bill Nye the Science Guy. Is addiction a disease? Or is it a chosen behaviour? Hear from scientists who are studying the brain, psychology, social factors, and genetics. Meet people who live with substance abuse issues then have students decide for themselves. This is a 25-minute video, intended for Healthy Living 9.

### Arts Education Update



In 2008–2009, grade 7 arts education curriculum is being piloted in all boards across the province. Three courses have been introduced to students: *Band Instruments 7*, *Music 7*, and *Visual Arts 7*. Students and teachers are enjoying tremendous successes

with the innovative, engaging, and challenging new curriculum. We hope to pilot similar arts courses at the grade 8 level in 2009–2010.

“Bringing Arts to Life” is the theme for Education Week 2009. We are proud to showcase dance, drama, music, and visual arts programs during the week of April 19–25, celebrating the role of arts education in public schools. In addition, a DVD will be produced, underscoring the importance of quality arts education as well as highlighting specific projects, as we continue to strive for excellence in all aspects of arts programming.

### Visual Arts Recognized in the 2008 Minister’s Report

The *Minister’s Report to Parents and Guardians: 2008 Student Assessment Results* will be distributed in the early spring of 2009. In recognition of the focus of Education Week 2009, the report will include samples of student work in the visual arts. Each work of art will represent a student’s use of the visual arts that represents his or her knowledge of literacy and mathematical concepts.

### Literacy Success 12

#### *Literacy Success 12*

*Part B* student resources have been distributed to high schools across the province. These student resources comprise four components— science, social studies, visual arts, and other resources particular to grade 12

content courses. There are 164 books included in the four components, some in varying multiples for small group instruction. Titles have been selected specifically for their direct relevance to the content areas.

#### *Literacy Success 12: Part B, Student Resources—*

*Component 1 (science)* is a collection of forty-five books offering texts that share information about important earth matters to explicit information about the human body.

#### *Literacy Success 12: Part B, Student Resources—*

*Component 2 (social studies)* is a collection of fifty-two books. Authors include David Suzuki, Elizabeth May, Rick Mercer, and Barack Obama. The fiction, non-fiction, and poetry resources in this collection address concerns surrounding our fragile earth; a powerful commentary on one of the many costs of wars; an adventure into cultural, historic, and natural places; and a look at the achievements of 200 of the most famous, important, or interesting Nobel prize winners of the 20th century.

#### *Literacy Success 12: Part B, Student Resources—*

*Component 3 (arts)*, a collection of twenty-nine books, includes a colourful collection of topics ranging from photography, film and video making, interior design, video gaming, and fashion to music and graffiti art.

#### *Literacy Success 12: Part B, Student Resources—*

*Component 4 (other)* is a collection of thirty-eight books. This inviting set of books provides captivating reading covering an array of topics from environmental issues, the world of business, the successful use of the Internet, to caring for children, amazing careers, human rights, and fascinating stories of heroes.



## February is Junior Achievement Month

## Skilled Trades Courses Launched



### Trades

The new Skilled Trades courses have begun in pilot schools in most school boards. Skilled courses, delivered in custom-designed Skilled Trades Centres—classroom and work space designed for the hands-on work of these courses—mark the beginning of integration of skilled trades education in our public schools.

Skilled Trades 10 focusses on four topic areas: skilled trades living, safety, measurement and calculation, and tools and materials. In grade 10, classes are 80 per cent hands-on with a real-world curriculum, and instructors have the highest level of trades certification in Canada. Skilled Trades 10 is open to any student who wants to explore the skilled trades and develop the skills necessary for a future in the culinary arts, construction, and transportation trades. These skills can be further developed in the Construction Trades 11 course, and students will have the opportunity for co-operative education work experience with a real employer in grade 12.

## Technology Education

Schools offering Construction 10 will be receiving ten copies of the text *Carpentry: Building and Construction*. This 2010 edition includes updates to North American building codes as well as green building techniques.

Schools offering Communications Technology 11 or 12 will receive eight copies each of the texts *Non-Designer's Web Book* and *Non-Designer's Design*. These resources are part of the ongoing support of composite programming in high schools.



## Inservicing for Grade 8 Geometry Outcomes

During the 2008–2009 school year, grade 8 mathematics teachers have the opportunity to participate in four days of inservicing for the new grade 8 geometry outcomes. They have already attended one 2-day session featuring work on unique triangles, congruency of triangles, properties of transformations, and regular polyhedra. The second 2-day session to be held in February 2009 is focussing on dilations, similar



## Health Education

*Healthy Mind, Healthy Body: A Mental Health Curriculum Supplement* is ready for distribution to each teacher of Health Education 4, 5, and 6 and to each teacher of Healthy Living 7, 8, and 9. These supplements are directly linked to the most recent specific curriculum outcomes related to mental and emotional health.

The *Healthy Mind, Healthy Body* supplements were developed by Dr. Bianca Horner in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Department of Education. They are shaped by a vision that mental health will be a part of children and youths' concept of health and well-being, enabling and encouraging them to speak as openly about feelings and behaviours as they would able physical health, and to speak freely about mental illness without shame.

*Healthy Mind, Healthy Body* has been field tested in school boards across Nova Scotia and was positively received by Nova Scotia teachers and students. It is anticipated that a French language version of these resources will be available late spring.



## Physical Education

As part of the introduction of Physical Education 10, the Department is providing one copy of the student textbook *Active Healthy Living: Physical Education in Nova Scotia* for each Physical Education 10 student this semester. This engaging, informative student textbook contains images of students in action throughout the province, together with a wealth of health-related information to enhance positive youth development and the promotion of being active for life. A companion to this student textbook, *Active Healthy Living: Physical Education in Nova Scotia, Teacher Resource* is being provided for each Physical Education 10 teacher.

figures, cones and cylinders, and drawing polyhedra.

Teachers are also being introduced to electronic versions of diagrams from the text that have been created for their use. The diagrams are provided in several formats: *The Geometer's Sketchpad* and *Microsoft Word* for the 2-D materials, and *Google Sketchup* and image files for the 3-D diagrams. These diagrams are available for teacher use at

<http://lrr.ednet.ns.ca/PD/math.shtml>

### Provincial Assessment Results Posted

Provincial and board level results for provincial assessments and examinations are available at <http://plans.ednet.ns.ca/>

To learn more about the purpose, development, administration, and follow up to each of the provincial assessments and examinations, please visit

Junior High Literacy Assessment (JHLA): <http://jhla.ednet.ns.ca/>

Early Elementary Mathematical Literacy assessment (EEMLA): <http://eemla.ednet.ns.ca/>

Early Language Literacy Assessment (ELLA) <http://ella.ednet.ns.ca/>

Elementary Literacy Assessment (ELA): <http://ela.ednet.ns.ca>

Nova Scotia Examinations in English: <http://plans.ednet.ns.ca/content/nse-english-12-and-english-communications-12>

Nova Scotia Examinations in Mathematics: <http://plans.ednet.ns.ca/content/nse-mathematics-12-advanced-mathematics-12> (English)

Examen de la Nouvelle-Écosse en Mathématiques 12 / Mathématiques avancées <http://plans.ednet.ns.ca/content/ené-mathématiques-12-mathématiques-avancées-12>

Appréciations de rendement en littératie au secondaire (ARLS) <http://arls.ednet.ns.ca/>

Appréciations de rendement en littératie à l'élémentaire (ARL) <http://arl.ednet.ns.ca/>

### Partnership Developed Between the Department of Education and the Department of Justice

The Evaluation Services Division of the Public Schools Branch assisted teachers from the Department of Justice in the creation of an assessment tool that provides information about the literacy skills of youth in custody or attending the Halifax Youth Attendance Centre. Teachers working with these youth are now using this information to develop plans targeted at the strengths, skills, and challenges of the individual learner.

### Developing School-based Common Assessments

The Public Schools' Branch Evaluation Services Division supports schools and school boards as they develop school-based common assessments. The Division works with schools and school boards to develop reliable, valid, accurate, and fair assessments based on a 13 step approach. School-based common assessments enable teachers, administrators, and school board personnel to obtain quality data to support components of the Nova Scotia School Accreditation Program (NSSAP) and other school-based data needs including

- support for the NSSAP Goals and Action Plan
- support for the NSSAP Measuring Growth Plan
- support for the NSSAP Professional Learning Plan
- information for instructional planning, and
- information for horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment

### Democracy 250 and Student Vote

#### Student Vote

This past year was the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of representative government in Nova Scotia and the beginning of democracy in Canada. As a part of this celebration, the Department of Education was pleased to partner with Student Vote and Democracy 250 to help promote habits of democratic citizenship among Nova Scotia students.

With the excitement of the federal election coupled with municipal elections, a record-breaking number of schools and students in Nova Scotia registered to participate in Student Vote. Two hundred and twenty-four schools, up from the 105 registered in 2006 and 22,882 students participated in the student-centred, activity-based program.

Since 2004, Nova Scotia has had a 100 per cent increase in school registration for Student Vote. For a breakdown of results, visit

<http://www.studentvote.ca>

## February is Heart Month



## Unique Partnership Helps Students Explore Career Options



Students in four school boards are exploring a career in the construction industry through a unique partnership with the Construction Association of Nova Scotia.

Upon program completion, students receive special training at the Nova Scotia Community College, a six-week paid summer work placement in their area of interest, and three high school credits in co-operative education. While at NSCC, students receive training in the areas of trades math and construction safety including certification in Fall Arrest, First Aid, and CPR. Students leave NSCC as registered construction trades pre-apprentices.

The Building Futures for Youth program was developed by the Construction Association of Nova Scotia, Department of Education, Department of Labour and Workforce Development, Nova Scotia Community College, and Halifax Regional School Board.

The program began with a pilot at the Halifax board in 2007-08 and expanded this year to include the Chignecto-Central and Cape Breton-Victoria regional school boards and the Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial schools in those three jurisdictions. It is expected to go province-wide next year.

Employers are embracing the program, and other sectors have expressed an interest in developing similar projects. Students not only gain through exploring career options, but also take away many benefits, such as safety certification, future work placements, and eligibility for a Building Futures for Youth scholarship.

For more information, please visit the website at <http://www.buildingfutures.ca>

## Options and Opportunities Update

*Options and Opportunities*, a high school program for students who have become disengaged from school, is now offered in forty-three schools. A total of 1,270 students are enrolled. Of the graduating class of 243 students, 71% have indicated that they are planning to continue their education next year.

The Options and Opportunities program emphasizes career preparation and planning and provides students with a minimum of 400 hours of co-operative education, whereby students learn in workplace and community settings.

2 options & opportunities

## Growing the International Baccalaureate (IB)

There are now 13 public schools offering the IB Program in Nova Scotia with over 750 students enrolled in the full diploma program and an additional 250 students taking certificate courses. The Department of Education has provided training workshops for IB teachers and guidance counselors in areas such as mathematics, the supervision of the Extended Essay, and the supervision of the Creativity/Action/Service Program.

In addition, with the support of University of Kings College, the Department of Education has provided six workshops for students on writing a research essay. Presented by Kings President, Dr. William Barker, and Mr. Allen Dick, Extended Essay Supervisor, Kings Edgehill School, the workshop has benefited more than 700 students and 200 teachers. Currently the Department of Education is negotiating with IB North America to provide in-province Level 2 training for all Nova Scotia IB teachers to build on the Level 1 training provided to teachers, co-ordinators, and administrators in December 2006.



Watch for the Summer Opportunities booklet, coming to a school near you!

## Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Awards

You probably have April 1 marked on your calendar as April Fools' Day, but did you know that it's also the final day for votes to be cast for this year's Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Awards?

Children from all over Atlantic Canada have spent the last few months reading some of the best Canadian books aimed at grades 4, 5 and 6. Now, their votes will decide the winners in the fiction and non-fiction categories in both English and French.

Don't forget to mark May 8 on your calendar, as well. That's the day of the gala awards ceremony at Halifax's Pier 21. Information about attending will be going out to participating schools by the end of March.

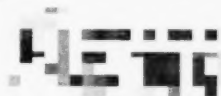


## Co-operative Education

Co-operative Education enrolments in Nova Scotia high schools have again shown significant growth in 2008–2009. All boards are reporting increased co-op course offerings and enrolment numbers. Province-wide, student participation in co-op courses in this school year has increased by 1103 students. Schools offering co-op prior to this year all have increased numbers, and six high schools are offering co-op for the first time this year.

All schools offering co-op have received Department of Education mentoring support to assist in this expansion. Co-operative Education is an opportunity for students at the high school level to explore a career interest and earn a high school credit by spending, in addition to 25 hours to complete the in-school component, a minimum of 100 hours in the workplace (55 hours in the workplace for a half-credit).

Co-operative education courses may be offered at grades 10, 11, and 12 either as full credits or half-credits. Each of these may be counted as elective credits to fulfil graduation requirements.



## The fourth week of February is Freedom to Read Week

### Public Schools Branch consists of the following Divisions:

African Canadian Services	902-424-3151	<a href="mailto:acsd@ednet.ns.ca">acsd@ednet.ns.ca</a>	<a href="http://acs.ednet.ns.ca">http://acs.ednet.ns.ca</a>
Diversity, Equity and Special Projects	902-722-1405	<a href="mailto:smithcla@gov.ns.ca">smithcla@gov.ns.ca</a>	
Education Quality Services	902-424-0040	<a href="mailto:crandace@gov.ns.ca">crandace@gov.ns.ca</a>	
English Program Services	902-424-8945	<a href="mailto:eps@ednet.ns.ca">eps@ednet.ns.ca</a>	<a href="http://eps.ednet.ns.ca">http://eps.ednet.ns.ca</a>
Evaluation Services	902-424-7746	<a href="mailto:testeval@ednet.ns.ca">testeval@ednet.ns.ca</a>	<a href="http://plans.ednet.ns.ca">http://plans.ednet.ns.ca</a>
French Second Language Program Services	902-424-6646	<a href="mailto:fls@ednet.ns.ca">fls@ednet.ns.ca</a>	
Learning Resources and Technology Services	902-424-2462	<a href="mailto:lrt@ednet.ns.ca">lrt@ednet.ns.ca</a>	<a href="http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca">http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca</a>
Mi'kmaq Liaison Office	902-424-3428		<a href="http://mikmaq.ednet.ns.ca">http://mikmaq.ednet.ns.ca</a>
Student Services	902-424-7454	<a href="mailto:studentsvcs@ednet.ns.ca">studentsvcs@ednet.ns.ca</a>	
Regional Education Services	902-424-5799	(Halifax - SSRSB, HRSB)	902-424-6097 (Halifax - CSAP)
	902-563-2080	(Sydney - CBVRSB)	
	902-893-5890	(Truro - CCRSB, SRSB)	
	902-742-3427	(Yarmouth - TCRSB, AVRSB)	
Senior Executive Director	902-424-5829	<a href="mailto:lowead@gov.ns.ca">lowead@gov.ns.ca</a>	

Nova Scotia Department of Education website: <http://www.ednet.ns.ca>

## ENVIROTHON 2009

Take *Biodiversity in a Changing World* and mix it with forestry, soils/land use, aquatic ecology, and wildlife and you get ENVIROTHON, a hands-on science based program at the high school level.



The 2009 Envirothon competition will be held at Acadia University April 30 – May 2, 2009. Entrance scholarships are now being offered to Envirothon participants at various schools. To learn more, visit

<http://www.nsf.ca>

## Viewfinders International Film Festival for Youth is Looking for Great Works of Film!

Viewfinders is looking for films, videos and animation from Atlantic Canadians ages 18 and under. Submissions must be under 5 minutes, suitable for family audiences, and have soundtracks with original or public domain music. The deadline is March 27, 2009. Don't delay! A link to the complete rules, regulations, and entry forms can be found online at

<http://www.atlanticfilm.com/view>

Viewfinders takes place from April 21 to 25, 2009.

### New for 2009:

**ViewFinders March Break Camp: Animated Minds** is a FREE camp where youth will create a series of stop-motion animation Public Service Announcements or short films that will aim to cultivate and communicate tolerance and understanding for adolescent mental health and well-being. The camp will be held at the Radio Room of the CBC Radio Building in Halifax, Nova Scotia from March 16 – 20, 2009.

Applications for this camp can be found on the Viewfinders website:

<http://www.atlanticfilm.com/view>

